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Permanent Memorial Commission Hosting Two Public Forums This Month

Tuesday, January 6, 2015



Photo:

The Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission is inviting the greater Newtown community to participate in two open forums this month on the topic of a permanent memorial to honor the 26 lives lost on 12/14.

SHPMC Public Forums at Newtown High School



Location: 12 Berkshire Road, Sandy Hook CT 06482

The Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission is inviting the greater Newtown community to participate in two open forums this month on the topic of a permanent memorial to honor the 26 lives lost on 12/14.

The open forums will take place at the Newtown High School lecture hall on Tuesday, January 20, and Thursday, January 29. Both will begin at 7 pm.

The commission is a group of 12 Newtown residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen in 2013, and charged with making a recommendation on whether a permanent memorial should be created.

If a memorial is recommended, the panel is also charged with determining or recommending design options, locations, and means of funding for any such project.

The commission has completed the first two phases of information gathering, which included initial and ongoing outreach to the 26 families who lost loved ones on 12/14. The commission has heard from 18 of these families through open forums, in person meetings, and surveys.

Phase II included collaboration with emergency services groups, parents of students enrolled at Sandy Hook Elementary School on the day of the tragedy, as well as staff members employed at Sandy Hook Elementary School that day.

The results of those forums will be forthcoming.

The final two phases will include communication and information gathering from the Newtown community as well as continued conversations with the 26 families regarding findings throughout the process.

The commission invites community members to these forums, which will also provide updates on the commissioners' progress over the past 16 months. There will be a moderator assisting with the conversations, along with commission members available to answer questions.

The purpose of these forums is to give the community a voice, be transparent about the discussions, and in turn listen to what those interested in participating have to say regarding the nature, design and location of a memorial in our community, according to Commission Chairman Kyle Lyddy.

"We have received incredible insight from many different groups around our community on the topic of a memorial and the commission wants to assure all of those who want to contribute to this conversation have the opportunity to do so," Mr Lyddy said in a release. "The commission wants to hear from those in or around the community that may have productive insight — we're here to listen."

Mr Lyddy said in every decision the commission continues to make, his panel of volunteers, which includes several victim's family members, tries to assure the best interest of all 26 of the victim's families are considered.

"That priority won't change. Understanding the sensitivity of this topic is still very raw in Newtown. We will continue to work to assure what we accomplish on this commission respectfully honors the 26 lives lost and is appropriate for our community," Mr Lyddy added.

The commission will not make a decision on if a memorial should be recommended until sufficient information has been gathered from the community. This will likely be accomplished after Phase III.

The next public meeting for the commission is scheduled for Thursday, January 8, at 7:30 pm. The commission will meet this month in the lower conference room of Town Hall South, 3 Main Street. It usually meets on the second Thursday of each month at Newtown Municipal Center.

For more information visit SandyHookPermanentMemorial.com; [Facebook.com/SandyHookPermanentMemorial](https://www.facebook.com/SandyHookPermanentMemorial); or follow [@SHPermMemorial](https://twitter.com/SHPermMemorial) on Twitter.